

AUGUST 17, 1948

Illinois U Library *Town Meeting*



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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Should College Football Be Subsidized?

Guest Moderator, ORVILLE HITCHCOCK

Speakers

GEORGE S. HALAS

HARRY WISMER

HERBERT O. (FRITZ) CRISLER

CLARENCE P. (POP) HOUSTON

(See also page 13)

COMING

—August 24, 1948—

Is Our Present Foreign Policy Leading to Peace
or War?

—August 31, 1948—

Is the Church Failing Our Youth?

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CONTENTS



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THE BROADCAST OF AUGUST 17:

"Should College Football Be Subsidized?"

<i>Mr. HITCHCOCK</i>	3
<i>Mr. HALAS</i>	5
<i>Mr. HOUSTON</i>	7
<i>Mr. WISMER</i>	9
<i>Mr. CRISLER</i>	12
THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN	13
QUESTIONS, PLEASE!	16



THE BROADCAST OF AUGUST 24:

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THE BROADCAST OF AUGUST 31:

"Is the Church Failing Our Youth?"



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GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



AUGUST 17, 1948

VOL. 14, No. 17

Should College Football Be Subsidized?

Announcer:

Last Tuesday night we said a regretful farewell to our West Coast friends for the summer. Tonight we are happy to be in Lansing, Michigan's thriving capital city where we are the guests of station WJIM and our regular sponsor, the Board of Water and Light Commissioners. This project is municipally owned and serves over 150,000 people with water, light, and heat at low rates.

We are broadcasting from Michigan State College, noted for its beautiful campus and the excellence of its science and agricultural programs.

Tonight, anticipating the football season, we turn to a hotly debated issue among sports lovers, "Should College Football Be Subsidized?" Some of the best-known names in the sports world will give you the arguments for both sides—George Halas of the Chicago Bears; "Fritz" Crisler of the University of Michigan at Ann

Arbor; Harry Wismer, sports director of the American Broadcasting Company; and "Pop" Houston, director of athletics at Tufts College and an official of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Now, to preside over our discussion in the absence of George V. Denny, Jr., here is Mr. Orville Hitchcock, former administrative assistant to Mr. Denny, now Associate Professor of Speech at the State University of Iowa. Mr. Hitchcock. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Hitchcock:

Good evening, friends. I am glad to have this opportunity to substitute for your regular moderator while he enjoys a well-earned vacation. I hope that my good friend, George Denny, is soaking up a lot of sunshine and storing up the energy which he will need to continue to bring you outstanding Town Meeting programs.

Now before we get into the

question for discussion, I have the honor to present to you the Governor of Michigan, the Honorable Kim Sigler, who is here on the platform tonight to welcome America's Town Meeting and our speakers. Governor Sigler. (*Applause.*)

Governor Sigler:

Thank you, Mr. Hitchcock, and good evening, ladies and gentlemen. As Governor of the great Commonwealth of Michigan, I am pleased to welcome ABC's Town Meeting of the Air to our beautiful campus of Michigan State College. An open forum discussion of important issues where both sides of the question are fully discussed is the American way. We of Michigan are firm believers in the American way. Therefore, I am pleased that this controversial issue is being fully weighed on tonight's program. Good luck, and may the right side win. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Hitchcock:

Thank you, Governor Sigler for extending Michigan's hospitality. It is hard to believe that the football season will soon roll around again, but in a little more than a month you and I will be putting on warm clothing, picking up our blankets, and streaming for high school and college football stadia all over the country.

Now while college football is very popular, it also has come in

for much criticism. This criticism has been directed mainly against the methods of recruiting and training players. Two principal schemes for rewarding athletes are now in operation.

Some colleges follow the student work plan. Athletes are given jobs at the college so that they can earn their board and room. Critics of this system say that the players are often paid excessively and that sometimes the jobs are soft snafus or even nonexistent.

This criticism led to the adoption only last January of a code for the conduct of athletics by the National Collegiate Athletic Association which will be explained later by our speakers.

But some people say that even this is not enough to solve the problem and argue that college football should be frankly subsidized. Put simply our question becomes, "Should College Athletes Be Paid?"

Our four well-qualified speakers are George Halas and Harry Wismer who are in favor of subsidizing college football, and Fritz Crisler and Pop Houston who are vigorously opposed.

First we shall hear from George S. Halas, qualified to talk about football from almost any point of view. Mr. Halas, was an all-American at Illinois. Since 1920 he has been player, owner, and coach of that great professional football team, the Chicago Bears.

Right now he is in the midst of getting his team ready for the 1948 season. I am pleased to introduce Mr. George Halas. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Halas:

I know that I am taking the presumably unpopular side of the question tonight, as far as most educators are concerned, because I believe that college football players should be honestly and openly subsidized.

A majority of colleges condemn subsidizing. Few, if any, admit that it exists except on the campus of a rival college or conference. Some colleges and conferences openly admit that they subsidize players, but have definite restrictions.

Let's examine the meaning of the frightening word "subsidization." Briefly, Webster describes it as the purchase of assistance by payment of a subsidy, or a gift made by way of financial aid.

Simply stated, by subsidizing football players, the schools are actually playing fair with their athletes. Why should it be a crime for a college to assist a needy student whose football talent is a direct monetary benefit to the school?

I believe that intramural sports are essential to the well-being of a student body, but I believe that these boys whose efforts bring thousands of dollars through football spectacles for intramurals are entitled to additional consideration.

I am sure that Fritz Crisler will agree that football players, good or bad, have to put in a lot of time at practice and skull sessions. An average of three hours a day are spent in football practice six days a week during September, October, and November, and, incidentally, in month-long spring practice sessions.

During the school year, a boy spends about 300 man-hours getting ready to play football, or the equivalent of seven and one half 40-hour weeks. That's a terrific sacrifice for a boy to make which no other college student is required to do.

Pop Houston, I know, agrees with me that nearly every boy goes to college primarily to further his education. The athletically inclined lad should have an opportunity to take part in sports without so many restrictions. Under present circumstances, without hidden financial help, only a well-to-do boy can afford to go to college and play football.

Collegiate codes now encourage underhand financial aid and drive it underground. How can colleges preach ethics in classrooms and at the same time condone make-work jobs and phony scholarships?

All efforts to stamp out underground financial aid have been futile, I think. It's just a form of collegiate bootlegging—its crime only in being caught.

Just recently, the University of

Virginia Board of Visitors indicated in an Associated Press dispatch from Richmond, that it could not adopt the National Collegiate Athletic Association Purity Code and enforce it to the letter although the Board agrees with the spirit of it.

Honest, aboveboard financial aid will assist in character building. Unethical handouts by anonymous alumni will be a thing of the past. No longer will it be possible to corrupt the honest intentions of a boy who looks up to his college leaders for guidance.

Why penalize the athlete who donates his talents and energies resulting in a neat profit for the university? The time spent in football practice sessions plus the problems of working outside to meet current college expenses, complicates the possibility of maintaining a high scholastic record. There just aren't enough hours in the day.

What penalties are levied against students who manage college newspapers. We know that they share in its profits at the end of the college year.

In other studies, such as music, science, or languages, students are subsidized by scholarships or through outside work. Just treat the football player the same way. The efforts of these players and their coaches produce winning football teams. The public and the alumni want to see winning football teams and see their football

teams go to one of the big bowl games on January 1. I'd like to recommend a wash bowl and clean up the present undercover system of financial aid. (Applause.)

Why not establish a recognized program of subsidization with specific controls? In that way, you will legalize what a vast number of colleges are now doing undercover. Such a program, I believe would put small colleges on an equal footing with the larger and wealthier schools. At the same time, more students are given the privilege of getting an education at a school of their own choosing.

In my humble opinion, the problem is not the elimination of subsidies. The problem is controlling the system. Let's do away with the evils of undercover bidding for players with scholarships, salaries or alumni-sponsored inducements.

Adopt uniform standards for assistance to the football player and you will eliminate the hypocrisy of under-the-table financed amateurs in schools.

We should have a recognized subsidy of college football players. Pop Houston as a member of the N.C.A.A. Enforcement Committee will agree with me on the necessity that it should be administered and controlled by college officials and no one else. There has always been a subsidizing by alumni and outsiders under cover.

As far as college football is concerned, it would suffer immeasurably without subsidizing. That

would hurt many fine boys and deprive them of opportunity. The present brand of football would be nothing to compare with the future. Public interest would decline. Only a few large schools could compete against each other. Schools of smaller enrollments, private, and most denominational schools could never compete with the large state-supported universities. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Hitchcock:

Thank you, Mr. Halas. Now we turn to a college football man for a somewhat different view on tonight's question. The program which I hold says that he is Professor Clarence P. Houston, but I am told that the students at Tufts College in Massachusetts call him "Pop." He was director of athletics at Tufts from 1919 until this year when he became faculty adviser on intercollegiate athletics. As chairman of the compliance committee of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, he knows tonight's question inside out. I am happy to present Mr. Houston. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Houston:

It would seem that our debate is boiling down to two points. The first is the contention that college football players should be hired by the college and paid a salary like any other employee. Maybe they would form a union. I suppose they would have to meet the necessary entrance require-

ments. Nevertheless, such players would be merely performers and the team would merely furnish entertainment as a business enterprise like a circus.

Colleges are supposed to provide an education for young men. Such a scheme as this would cut out any semblance of amateurism and be of doubtful legality.

These colleges would, of course, play among themselves and not with those colleges which refuse to go in for paid players as the games would be too one-sided.

I take it that my friend George Halas, for the affirmative, does not stoutly advocate such a program. In fact, I suspect he is "agin" it.

Now the second point is more argumentative. How much of a subsidy should the college give a football player?

Here is where there may be some disagreement. It is to be remembered that we are not here debating whether some football players are, in fact, subsidized. It must be admitted that there is such hiring, not, however, in the degree commonly assumed to be the fact.

We are here debating whether college football players should be subsidized.

At first, let us see what is not a subsidy. Aid from one's parents or from one upon whom the recipient is naturally or legally entitled to look for his support is not a subsidy.

Money earned at an honest job, the pay being at the going rates,

is not, contrary to the ideas of many, a subsidy as that word is used in athletics. It's not a subsidy to help a young man in getting such honest employment.

Moreover financial aid, usually in terms of scholarships awarded by the college because of high academic records, are not subsidies even though the recipient may be an athlete.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association, which is the parent and governing body for inter-collegiate athletics and to which colleges belong, if they have football teams, has studied this problem for several years, not of paying athletes, but of giving them financial aid.

The study has been made, in part, because of the prevailing belief by a section of the public that colleges with successful teams pay their players. This association adopted a code for the conduct of athletics last January, one part of which provides, in substance, that financial aid may be granted by a college because of athletic or other ability, if the student needs the aid for his education and if the aid does not exceed in amount his tuition.

Steps are now being taken to suspend from membership those colleges which do not live up to and comply with this code. It is to be noted that such action is in line with the policy of recognizing athletics like musical or dramatic

activities, as an integral part of college education.

Undoubtedly, football has been selected for this discussion because of the size of the gate receipts. When we read in the newspapers that there have been 60,000 spectators at a college football game, each paying \$3 or \$4 for a seat, it is easy to argue that the hardworking player ought to get something. But the fact is that only a comparatively small number of colleges are the gate receipts more than enough to pay the expenses of the game.

In the last year, when any complete figures are available, there were 700 colleges playing football. This meant about 2,800 games in a season. Only one-seventh of these games were reported as having attendance large enough to even be listed in the Associated Press Poll.

Furthermore, a recent count shows that there are less than 100 colleges in the whole United States which have a seating capacity for more than 10,000 persons.

At this point, let me suggest that, curiously enough, we are here debating the subject of football and not any one of the many other sports which the college boys annually play, and in many of which there is as much work and skill as in the game of football.

To give a boy a greater subsidy because he plays football, will lead him to believe that he must be paid for anything he does which is of interest to the public.

Young men go to college to obtain an education. If a football player is subsidized, where the gate receipts are big enough, then, with always a few exceptions, football will become the major job of these young men and their education will be a sideline.

Tufts College, with which I have been connected for more than a quarter of a century, is a small college, comparatively. Like the great majority of America's colleges which have football teams, it has small gate receipts, and it, like these other colleges, does not have to pay its boys to induce them to play football. They love the game and, when the crisp autumn days come, they don't need any other inducement than the natural urge to make the team.

Participation in athletics is part of the training which helps to make the whole man. Football, like other sports, teaches self-sacrifice, community spirit, and like qualities. It is an integral part of our education. To pay the student will help to rob athletics of their contribution to our American life. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Hitchcock:

Thank you, Professor Houston. Now, on the affirmative of tonight's question, here is Harry Wismer, sports director of the American Broadcasting Company, who tonight will step out of his official role with the network and present his own personal views. Mr. Wis-

mer played football for St. John's Military Academy and with the University of Florida, until a broken leg cut short his career. Then he transferred to Michigan State here in East Lansing, where he began sport announcing over the college station. I am happy to present Harry Wismer. Mr. Wismer. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Wismer:

Thank you, Mr. Hitchcock. Good evening, everyone across the nation and greetings, folks here at Michigan State College. It's a real thrill for me to be back on the campus.

I definitely feel and have for some time that an athlete is deserving of financial assistance while going to college. Many athletes come from families that aren't too well-to-do and their athletic abilities make it possible for them to gain the advantage of a college education, providing some avenue is open to them, whereby they can see their way clear to make the grade financially.

I personally feel, however, that regardless of a family's finances, it is beneficial for any student to partially support himself while in school. A full school schedule, with the burning ambition to be a top athlete, makes it pretty difficult to hold a part-time job and a job, if the work can be sloughed could really be classed as subsidization under cover.

Naturally, as Pop Houston and

Fritz Crisler well know, in order to qualify for a scholarship, an athlete must be a good citizen, as well as an above-average student. We all know that scholarships are given out for academic prowess as well as to members of the band or glee club, so what's wrong with a scholarship for an athlete who also is a good student?

There has been a lot written and said about college athletics in this country. Many long-haired professors have been against them. In fact, one school—the University of Chicago—gave up inter-collegiate athletics altogether. However, the major athletic program—principally football, basketball and baseball—pays the way for all other sports activities of any college or university.

So, in my estimation, the subsidizing of an athlete benefits the entire college athletic program, especially in connection with the not-too-popular sports.

Therefore, the boys who give up so much of their time on the football field, the basketball court, or the baseball diamond have contributed a great deal to their fellow students. Not only have they given them something to cheer about, but the revenue derived at the gate in the games in which they participate, goes toward paying for the intramural sports for the rest of the school, tennis courts, golf courses, handball courts, intramural gymnasium and

basketball courts, field hockey, and many other activities in which the well-balanced student enjoys participating.

George Halas and I sincerely feel that oftentimes the opportunity for help through college given to the athlete has been the means of changing his entire life. It has given him a much better environment, taught him how to get along with his fellowman, and given him the courage to go ahead and become an important part of his community.

At this time, in this country, juvenile delinquency is at its worst and I am sure that you will find that consultation with Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, the head of the FBI or with any judges in responsible cities and communities, that athletics are the greatest combatant of juvenile delinquency. (*Applause*) It teaches team play, spirit, and competitive zeal, and through their desire to stay in good condition, so that they can make the teams and be a credit to their friends and school, it has a strong tendency to keep them away from other activities far less beneficial.

Another reason why college athletes should be given a chance to have their way paid through school is because, while on the practice field, it is necessary for the boys to spend so much time that it is almost impossible after practice to carry on a job and get all the necessary studying done.

I believe many will agree with me that most athletes have had assistance of a sort. My thinking is that it is not subsidization that will harm the athlete but the mismanagement of subsidization that will cause the damage.

You can't convince me that offering a good student and citizen honest, above-board help, in order to participate in a nation-wide sport, will harm his ideals or morals. However, I do question the type of help now given in our colleges and universities where the athlete is given a job without work, whereby being subject to the jibes of fellow students who can't be athletes but still have to work long hours in order to stay in school, just as I question the aid of some enthusiastic alumnus who hands it out with the remark "off the record."

Do you feel that such tactics contribute to character building? Why wouldn't that easy-come assistance give lots of our young men of tomorrow the idea that things in general come pretty easy?

In conclusion, America is a country of hero worship. The young people of this Nation—most of them at least—idolize the top college football stars of today. They idolize the top baseball stars, or basketball stars, or whatever the sports may be. They read about them in the newspapers, in the magazines, and hear about them over the radio. They have their

pictures tacked up in their bedrooms. They swarm all over top athletes when they can get close enough to them for their autographs. In their hearts and minds, many of them carry the burning ambition to someday be that same type of athlete themselves.

Our schools' athletic programs give them something to build to, to look forward to, to aspire to, and in many cases these same youngsters would not have that opportunity at a future date unless they could get some financial help through college.

Naturally, we are against five or six rich alumni contributing to the big stars and forgetting the man on the line. There should be some way of regulating a just compensation for an athlete who aspires to good citizenship and excellency on the field of play. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Hitchcock:

Thank you, Mr. Wismer. Our final speaker, Fritz Crisler, needs no introduction to a Michigan audience, or to any audience, for that matter. He is well-known everywhere for his work as head football coach at the University of Michigan for the past ten years. This year he is dropping out of his coaching activities, but will continue as director of athletics, a post which he has held since 1941. Mr. Crisler is past president of the American Football Coaches Association, and has been active in

shaping college football policies. I'm pleased to welcome Mr. Crisler to Town Meeting. He will speak to us from Wichita, Kansas.

Mr. Crisler:

An early experience was an influence in formulating my conviction that college football players should not be paid. As a kid, I lived in the small town of Earlville, Illinois. Out of this community of 1,200 people, the young fellows organized a baseball team in the summer. We played neighboring villages of the same size. Sometimes we would beat our opponents, sometimes we would lose.

Then supporters of the teams began to hire players—first a pitcher, then a batter, an entire infield, and finally the whole team. Now the kids who played originally sat on the sidelines and rooted for the paid representatives who lived out of town. The games won and lost by the imported hirelings were about the same as when we played.

The next year, drives for funds were made to insure victory. Economically, little Earlville couldn't stand the pace and had to drop out. Soon other towns had to quit and baseball in those villages was not played for years.

The same thing could well happen to college football, if a paid-player basis were adopted universally. Would it not be all too common for an institution to be

represented by teams better than those that can be made out of young men who select a university because of the educational opportunities it affords?

It would naturally follow that a very great centralization would take place, based on the drawing power in metropolitan areas where the greatest funds were available. The small and isolated would likely have to drop out.

What chance would there be for a boy without experience, or prominent high school reputation as a player, of making the team? He probably wouldn't even get a chance to try with a paid athlete.

Al Wistert, who is an all-American in Michigan, probably would never have played because he didn't play football before entering college. We have several such boys every year, as do other teams.

Perhaps the best way for anyone to resolve this interesting subject is to pose the question—if I had a son who was about to enter college with a desire to play football, would I want him to be a paid player?

If you answer this question honestly, you'll have the answer as to whether or not football players should be hired.

I have a son who will soon be eligible for college. He has a burning desire to play football. He may have some ability. I hope he makes the team, but I don't want him to be paid for playing.

With due respect for the con-

victions of George Halas and Harry Wismer, who are my personal friends held in high esteem, I feel the same about their sons, or your son, or any boy.

As Pop Houston has ably pointed out, the primary function of a college is to enrich its students to a well-established educational process with activities incidental thereto. Football should be one of those incidental activities.

If players were paid, emphasis would be misplaced and the values distorted. Pressures of making good in order to earn money would likely make easy courses popular and low grades accept-

able. It could well confirm the popular misconception that football players are big burly chaps whose heads are just a continuation of their necks with a little hair on them.

It is not necessary to cheat or buy players in order to produce a team of which a school may be proud. A college with courage need not hire a squad of mercenaries to wear its uniform. We've seen about the last of an obscure school going to sport page glory in one season in the wake of a football team of tramp athletes hired in the market-place.

I tread warily in the paths of

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

GEORGE S. HALAS—Owner and coach of the Chicago Bears. Mr. Halas spent 37 months in the Navy during World War II. With a rank of Commander, he spent 20 months in the Pacific theater where he supervised the welfare and recreation of two million officers and men.

CLARENCE PRESTON (POP) HOUSTON — Mr. Houston, a lawyer and educator, was born in Virgil, South Dakota, in 1891. He received degrees from Tufts College and Northeastern University. Admitted to the Massachusetts bar he was a member of the firm of Russell, Pugh & Joslin from 1924 to 1929, and a member of Russell, Houston & Russell, from 1929 to 1938.

Since 1934 Mr. Houston has been a professor of Commercial law at Tufts College. He also taught constitutional law in the extension courses of Harvard University from 1936 to 1944. From 1919 until this year, Mr. Houston was director of athletics at Tufts.

During World War I, Mr. Houston served in the A.E.F. from 1917 to 1919. He is chairman of the Compliance Committee of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

HERBERT ORIN (FRITZ) CRISLER—Born in

Earlyville, Illinois, in 1899, Mr. Crisler received a degree from the University of Chicago, where he joined the athletic department staff immediately upon graduation. From 1922 until 1930 he was an assistant coach of football, basketball, and baseball. In 1930 he became athletic director and football coach at the University of Minnesota. After one year, he went to Princeton, where he was football coach for six years, and basketball coach for one year.

From 1938 until 1948, when he retired, Mr. Crisler was football coach and director of athletics at the University of Michigan.

HARRY WISMER—Mr. Wismer is sports director of the American Broadcasting Company. He played football while at St. John's Military Academy and at the University of Florida. At Michigan State College he was a sports announcer on the college station.

ORVILLE HITCHCOCK — Mr. Hitchcock was formerly associated with Town Hall as administrative assistant to George V. Denny, Jr., Moderator of Town Meeting of the Air. Mr. Hitchcock is now associate professor of speech at State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

football prophecy, but if college football becomes a nursery for professional gladiators, I fear for its future.

I presume there is nothing intrinsically dishonorable about accepting pay as a player, but if it is money that a college man wants, he ought to be able to make more in a real job, than by prostituting a physical skill by offering it for sale.

If it is fame he wants, let him go after a brand that won't turn shiny in the seat before he is thirty, the kind that isn't common to beauty-contest winners, the local pie-eating champions or dance-marathon medal men.

I know of a young man now on our team who transferred to Michigan from a school where he was paid for playing. He made this significant remark after having been at that place for a year. "I dislike being thought of as a chattel owned by that institution."

No great thing is ever accomplished without a sustained background of deep feeling. This is the great intangible and deep-seated motive, the heart interest underneath college football. Love of country is the only thing that can compare with it. Mercenary troops are serviceable in routine fighting, but when they come to grips with patriots on anything like even terms, they break and run.

Bob Chappuis, one of our great halfbacks last year, was asked how

much he was paid for playing. His honest reply was, "Nothing."

The interrogator replied, "You are either a liar or a fool."

Bob retorted that his reward was the sheer joy of playing, the deep-rooted feeling for his Alma Mater and his association with his unselfish teammates. To subsidize a player would do irreparable damage to him and the entire program of education. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Hitchcock:

Thank you, Mr. Crisler. Now gentlemen, I wonder if you will join me around the microphone and Mr. Crisler, you come in over the air from Wichita, so that we can probe more deeply into some of these issues in just a minute or two. Mr. Halas, do you have a question?

Mr. Halas: I do have a question. I'd like to ask Fritz Crisler. Fritz posed the question, "Would you want your son paid?" Well, Fritz, when you're talking to corporation presidents, industrial leaders, and well-to-do alumni, the answer comes in a steady chorus of "No." But, Fritz, what answer would you get if you asked that question of a father who is a coal miner, or who works in the assembly line of a factory, whose sons want a higher education, who are athletically inclined, but cannot afford to go to college?

Mr. Crisler: Well, I presume that it would be natural for the father, the coal miner, to like to

have his son paid, if that is the thing that he wants him to pursue in after life. If he wants him to get a fine education that will be lasting and he will use for several years, I presume that he might have the feeling that the boy would be better prepared if he laid emphasis on a professional career rather than preparing, perhaps, for a professional sports career.

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Mr. Crisler. I wonder if you have a question while you're there now to ask one of these gentlemen?

Mr. Crisler: Why, yes, I should like to give one back to George Halas. By implication, at least, George Halas declares that the amateur standard, for the most part, is quite dishonestly administered. To correct the evil, the cure proposed is to adopt a uniform pay scale for all players. Would not the new standard then be only a base from which cheating, subterfuge, and dishonest administration operate, in order to have a better team than a rival institution?

Mr. Hitchcock: Mr. Halas, do you want to grapple with that briefly?

Mr. Halas: Well, I believe that under present conditions of having the alumni come in to handle those under-the-cover payments, there is a greater chance for cheating. However, if there is a controlled subsidization, controlled

by college officials only—not having the alumni have any part of it—I'm sure that there would be a very honest administration of such payments.

Mr. Hitchcock: I think we have time for a very brief question here. Do you have a very brief one?

Mr. Houston: Yes, I want to ask Harry a question. I just want to tell him that I noticed that long-haired professor allusion. I got my hair cut before I left Boston, so I'm one ahead of him. *(Laughter.)*

Harry Wismer: And you look much better, Pops!

Mr. Hitchcock: I'm afraid that that's all the time that we have for round-table discussion, gentlemen. Now while we get ready for our question period, I am sure that you, our listeners, will be interested in the following message.

Announcer: You are listening to America's Town Meeting of the Air, coming to you from Lansing, Michigan, where we are the guests of Station WJIM and the Board of Water and Light Commissioners.

We are discussing the question, "Should College Football Be Subsidized?" You have just heard from George Halas, Fritz Crisler, Harry Wismer, and Pop Houston. We're about to take questions from our audience.

In the meantime, let me remind you that for your convenience we

print each week a complete text, including the questions and answers, in the Town Meeting Bulletin, which you may secure by writing to Town Hall, New York 18, New York, enclosing 10 cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Allow at least two weeks for delivery.

If you would like to subscribe to the Bulletin for six months, enclose \$2.35, or for a year, send \$4.50, or, if you would like a trial subscription, enclose \$1 for 11 issues. School officials who wish to use the Town Meeting Bulletin in their classrooms during the coming school term should enter their subscriptions now.

Your Town Meeting will return to its home base at Town Hall in New York in late September, and take up the many important problems which confront us during an election year.

Next week, Town Meeting will originate in Marion, Ohio, with discussion of a major international issue. "Is Our Present Foreign Policy Leading to Peace or War?" We will be the guests of the Marion Chamber of Commerce and Station WMRN. Tickets for the broadcast may be obtained at the Chamber of Commerce in Marion.

Now for our question period we return to our guest moderator Mr. Hitchcock.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE

Mr. Hitchcock: Tonight, this enthusiastic audience of 5,000, shall we say football fans, is assembled in the Michigan State College Auditorium and eager to ask questions of our four experts. Our assistants are in the aisles with portable microphones. People with questions are holding up their number cards to indicate the speaker to whom the question is directed. We'll start with the question from the gentleman over on the left aisle.

Man: I should like to ask Mr. Wismer, is subsidization practical? That is, could it be carried on without turning player recruiting into a tobacco auction with the highest bidder getting the best talent?

Mr. Wismer: No, the recommendation we gave was that it had been mismanaged. What we wanted to do was get a real strict management of it and an honest interpretation of it and none of the underhanded under-the-table deals from various sections of the Nation for a player.

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Mr. Wismer. Now, we have another question from another gentleman over on the right.

Man: My question is addressed to Mr. Houston. If the N.C.A.A. is sincere in helping needy students, why does N.C.A.A. limit aid to tuition only, which is the smallest part of the cost of a college education?

Mr. Houston: I would answer that in this way. Unfortunately, I didn't have time to tell you all the provisions of the N.C.A.A. code. It doesn't limit help to students to tuition only. If a student is a good scholar, if he has high academic standing, there is no limit to the tuition which he may get. That must, however, be based upon good academic standing. If, however, he gets aid because of athletic ability only, then it's limited to tuition and the incidental fees, such as laboratory fees.

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Mr. Houston. Now, I see a gentleman with a No. 4 card. That means a question for Mr. Crisler. Yes, sir?

Man: This is to Mr. Crisler. If college football is considered an amateur sport, why do colleges insist on demanding exorbitant prices of admission at all football games? *(Applause.)*

Mr. Crisler: Well, I should answer that by suggesting that we would be just as delighted as anybody else to give free admission, just the same as professional football—I think they'd be glad to do that if that were possible—the theaters, or any other form of amusement. However, we have a tremendous program, and athletics, from whatever income we have, must underwrite that. For that reason, we charge gate receipts, and we think they're not exorbitant.

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, thank

you Mr. Crisler. Now a gentleman over here has a question for Mr. Halas, I think. Yes, sir?

Man: My question is addressed to Coach Halas. Should alumni pay commissions for passes completed, tackles made, passes intercepted, etc., when the player is already attending school on the benefits of an athletic scholarship?

Mr. Hitchcock: That sounded like more than 25 words, Mr. Halas, but you do your best at it.

Mr. Halas: Well, I'd like to have that repeated if you don't mind, where he starts talking about tackles by the boys.

Mr. Hitchcock: Would you mind stating your question again, just a little more slowly, please?

Man: Is it all right for alumni to pay commissions for passes completed and so forth, when the player is already attending school on the benefits of an athletic scholarship?

Mr. Halas: Why, no, if they already have a scholarship, there is certainly no reason to have any alumni help. In all cases, the thing is we should stress why the students are in college and not how. Because if the *why* is right, the *how* becomes unimportant.

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, sir. Thank you, Mr. Halas. Now there's a question back here.

Man: I'd like to ask Harry Wismer, how do you propose to inculcate these powerful and well-

heeled alumni clubs with the spirit of pure amateurism and hence prevent their subsidizing players, Harry?

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, Harry, there you are.

Mr. Wismer: That's a very interesting question and I'm sure that the Town Meeting of the Air, through its great magnitude in this Nation, and the folks here tonight will some way be able to solve it. It might be a good thing to start right here in East Lansing. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, Mr. Wismer. We'll consider what you said for a while. Let's have another question in the meantime. The gentleman in the balcony.

Man: Mr. Crisler, would you please differentiate between out-right subsidizing by scholarships and that type which is given on the sly by alumni and industrial organizations and which kind is more preferable?

Mr. Hitchcock: That's a good question, Mr. Crisler.

Mr. Crisler: Well, I should say first that I think Pop Houston has defined what subsidization is as far as the N.C.A.A. code is concerned. It isn't paying a player particularly because of football if he is given a scholarship. If he is given more than a tuition scholarship for high scholastic average, that is not considered paying a player. That's a privilege and opportunity which he takes advantage of. But where

a player is paid directly because of his athletic gifts and his ability to play football, I should say that that is directly on a paid player basis, and, in my opinion, with due respect to my opponents, is not wise thing to do.

Mr. Hitchcock: Thanks, Mr. Crisler. Now we have another gentleman in a tan coat here who has a question. Aren't there any ladies who are going to ask questions tonight? Couldn't we have a lady in a minute raise a card? All right. The gentleman in the tan coat.

Man: I'd like to ask Mr. Halas why is there any reason to assume that admitted payments would eliminate payments on the side? Wouldn't competition for players maintain the present evils regardless of what was admitted?

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, sir. Do you want to try that one?

Mr. Halas: That is true. There would be no controlling of payments on the side, but if this over-all system was adopted, I'm sure that an honest policy would then survive entirely.

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, thanks Mr. Halas. Now I see another question for Mr. Wismer on the right.

Man: My question is addressed to Mr. Wismer. What if a player who was subsidized had scholastic difficulties and was not able to play?

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, Mr. Wismer.

Mr. Wismer: I'm sorry, I didn't understand that. What if a player is subsidized and has scholastic difficulties—what was that?

Man: Would not be able to play.

Mr. Wismer: Well, that has happened many times, I imagine and I imagine that under the mismanagement of that situation, the boy somehow or other was found looking for enrollment in some other institution. In many cases, he found it. But there's no uniform rule on that, nor is there any uniform rule on anything else thus far in the activity on the college gridirons.

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Mr. Wismer. Now I see another gentleman in the balcony who has a question.

Man: My question is directed to Pop Houston. Would not open subsidization of college athletes bring out athletes with more ability and aggressiveness than at present and give the paying public a better game?

Mr. Houston: I don't think there's any question but what the more you pay the players the better players you will get. That's not, of course, the primary purpose of college education. Good football coaches have said that because scholarships are limited to athletes will not affect the over-all picture of the quality of football games.

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, Mr. Houston. Don't any of you gentlemen on the program disagree with each other on your answers to these questions? Any of you want to comment, for example, on that answer? Mr. Wismer?

Mr. Wismer: No, I'd much rather the 5,000 people would have a chance to get in on it.

Mr. Hitchcock: All right. Well we'll give those 5,000 people a chance. First, the gentleman right here who has a question for you, Harry, so you should stay here.

Man: My question is addressed to Mr. Wismer. How many star football players have ever quit because they were not paid?

Mr. Wismer: How many star football players quit because they were not paid? Well, I haven't looked up the latest census on that, and whether or not there is any official government bureaucracy that completes a situation of that nature I don't know. But I do know that there's very few of them who have ever quit under those circumstances.

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, sir. Now we have a question from the gentleman in the middle of the aisle.

Man: I'd like to ask Mr. Crisler this question. Why is it ethical for university alumni to subsidize a football player and unethical for the university to do so?

Mr. Crisler: Well, I think the college rules, the conference rules,

do not consider it ethical, as you pose the question, to underwrite football players. There is nothing wrong with an alumnus—if he is a long acquaintance of the family, or a personal friend of the boy, and he has a real and genuine desire to help that boy as a friend—of helping him with his college education. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: All right, thank Mr. Crisler. We have some disagreement here.

Mr. Houston: I don't disagree with Fritz. In fact, I didn't hear what he said, but I just want to say a word about this alumni business that there is so much talk about. Smart alumni who are smart enough to make money to give away are usually smart enough to give it to the colleges because they are wiser about giving it out to students than the alumni.

But sometimes there are sophomore alumni who want to give out their money. Now the only trouble with that is that, under the National Collegiate Athletic Association Code, if it's given out through the college, it's perfectly all right, and in accordance with the scheme. But if they give it out not through the college, then the boy suffers and is rendered ineligible.

Mr. Hitchcock: Do any of you other gentlemen have remarks on that subject? Mr. Halas, do you agree with everything that was said

on both sides? The gentleman in the front row.

Man: I've got a question for Mr. Halas. Isn't it selfish from your standpoint in that it might cause the athlete to play harder and possibly bring out talents not otherwise shown for future use?

Mr. Halas: No, I don't think that payments that way would make a player play any harder. It so happens that I am in the professional football game, and I'm sure that the fact that they are getting paid makes them play no harder than they did at college. They still have the college spirit and play just as hard in professional football.

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Mr. Halas. I see another gentleman in the balcony who has a question he thinks to ask now.

Man: My question is for Mr. Wismer. How do you think the small colleges should go about meeting the no-doubt higher wages the larger schools would be able to pay?

Mr. Wismer: How do I feel that colleges should go about taking care of the wages the bigger colleges would pay? Well, that's a very interesting question, also. But I would say that it all depends—as Fritz Crisler said, I don't imagine that at Tufts, where our good friend Pops Houston holds sway, that they charge as much as they do at the vast University of Michigan stadium where 90,000

people can very well see a football game. I understand you're going to have a nice stadium here, too. Congratulations. (*Laughter and applause.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: I'm sure the people of Michigan State appreciate that public announcement, Mr. Wismer. Now we have a question from a gentleman on the left side of the auditorium for Mr. Crisler, I think.

Man: I address my question to Mr. Crisler. If you know that any players on your teams are subsidized, do you bar them from participation? (*Applause and laughter.*)

Mr. Crisler: Well, yes. I do not hesitate to answer that at all. If we did have any players who were subsidized contrary to rule, of course, they would be barred from participation. It might be interesting to know that in the interest of making an investigation, an F.B.I. trained investigator visited the University of Michigan to see if there were any irregularity. He reported back to the Commissioner of our conference. It was very gratifying to me to find that there were no irregularities in the administration of our athletics at the University of Michigan. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: Thanks, Mr. Crisler. Now we have a gentleman 'way back in the rear of the auditorium who has a question.

Man: I have a question directed

to Pop Houston. I'd like to know if football can't teach self-reliance, courage, and initiative without provoking starvation and financial difficulties among athletes? (*Applause.*)

Mr. Houston: Last year \$11,000,000 were given out to 75,000 college students for scholarships. That's outside of any government subsidy. In other words, there are plenty of scholarships for boys who are good students and good athletes and good citizens as Harry Wismer said. I think you'd have some difficulty in finding a boy starving who wanted to go to college who combined those qualities. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Pop.

Mr. Crisler: Mr. Hitchcock, may I make a comment here?

Mr. Hitchcock: Yes, Mr. Crisler.

Mr. Crisler: I observe that in that question it was suggested that we might be provoking starvation if we didn't pay these players. We played a good many teams in the years that I have been in Michigan, and I don't believe any of the players were paid, at least so far as I know, they weren't. But in all the years that I have played, among the opponents that we met at Michigan, I haven't seen anybody across the line from us that was very decrepit from starvation. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: All right. Thank you, Mr. Crisler. Finally I see a lady in a red hat who is going to

ask a question about football. I think that's an achievement. Will the lady ask her question?

Lady: Mr. Halas, why do colleges sponsor football—to raise money for these institutions or to encourage sportsmanship and school spirit?

Mr. Halas: Well, that is a question, whether the football games are put on as educational enterprises or because they are an entertainment feature. I believe in most cases that they not only do that to promote sportsmanship among the players and the student body, but also to provide money to pay or finance the intramural sports, that is, the sports for the body as a whole.

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Mr. Halas. Now we have another questioner in the balcony, and another lady, I think.

Lady: Mr. Wismer, school spirit is one of the things that helps to make a college tick. Wouldn't the subsidization of players help to reduce that spirit?

Mr. Halas: I'll answer that question after the Michigan State-Michigan game played at the Michigan State stadium here this fall. Now if there are any subsidized players on either school—I'm not sure that there are and we're not making any definite statements—but if Michigan State should win and Michigan should lose, I'm sure the college spirit here would be very high that Saturday night. Do you

agree with me? (*Applause.*) All right. Thank you.

Mr. Hitchcock: We have time for one more brief question for Mr. Wismer while he's up here and I see another lady, so let's go her in.

Lady: Mr. Wismer, are subsidized college athletics a combatant of juvenile delinquency? (*Applause.*)

Mr. Wismer: I didn't hear you please.

Mr. Hitchcock: Does subsidizing college athletes combat juvenile delinquency? You have five seconds.

Mr. Wismer: Well, the playing on the field has a great deal to do with the reaction and the inspiration that is given to the youth and actually it isn't anything to laugh about.

Mr. Hitchcock: All right. Thank you, Mr. Wismer. I'm sorry we don't have time for more questions. Now, while our speakers prepare their summaries of tonight's questions, here is a special message of interest to you.

Announcer: America's Town Meeting of the Air is produced by Town Hall, in cooperation with the American Broadcasting Company. Town Hall is a nonpartisan adult education organization which conducts an extension program of lectures and short courses in New York City. Founded in 1894 as the League for Political Education, Town Hall has been

pioneer in adult education and a model for similar programs the country over.

You can play a part in the Town Meeting broadcasts by helping us select subjects for this program. Please send your suggestions and let us know what you think are the crucial issues of the coming months. Direct your cards or letters to Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

Let me remind you, once again, that if you want a complete, word for word copy of tonight's broadcast, you may secure it by writing to Town Hall. Remember the address; Town Hall, New York 18, New York. Now for the summaries of tonight's discussion, here is your guest moderator, Mr. Hitchcock.

Mr. Hitchcock: First, we shall hear from Professor Clarence Houston for the negative. Mr. Houston.

Mr. Houston: All the speakers on this program are primarily interested in what is best for the boy, not what is best for the college, or for the spectators. I think each college has to make up its mind as to what path it wants to follow. If it wants to go on a paid player basis, that is its right. Those who want to keep athletics on a sensible basis—a basis where every student has a chance to make the team—on an amateur basis, that is their right. Each one should play its own kind.

But it's deeper than that. The game of football in college is in jeopardy. It is worth saving as an institution and as a sport for the benefit of the boys and for the great numbers of the public that like it and wait for each week end.

To urge that players be paid is to put football in a different class than any other sport. Colleges or college students do not want to compete with professional football. There is a place for both. The college is the place for the unpaid players. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Mr. Houston. The summary for the affirmative will be given by Harry Wismer.

Mr. Wismer: Everyone, including Pop Houston and Fritz Crisler, agree that the young deserving athlete deserves a chance, that he shouldn't be legislated against because he gets his name in the headlines, and is lucky enough to have three healthy square meals a day.

What about the student that gives nothing to his university or college, but was fortunate enough to be able to buy seats on the 50-yard line and have a gala week end at the fraternity or sorority house. How about the poor athlete who is a hero when he wins and a bum when he loses.

Let's look out for the best interests of our young folks, who desire a chance in education and who are willing to give that extra something so the pennant-waving boys can take a bow.

Let's face facts, not deal under the table. Why can't our academic brain-trusters devise a workable, fair way of advising boys 20, 30, and 40 years their junior? After all, 90 per cent of the boys in athletics sincerely want an education, and a majority of them hope to be and have been a credit to their community. Through their efforts on the gridiron, they have been an inspiration to the young boys in their early teens—a shining beacon for young America to follow, a real force against juvenile delinquency.

George Halas and I feel, and I'm sure that Fritz Crisler and Pop Houston feel, that the boys are striving to win for the classmates, their family, their home town—our American way of life. Let's give them a break. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Hitchcock: Thank you, Harry Wismer, Fritz Crisler, Pop Houston, and George Halas, for a stimulating discussion of a touchy but important question. And thanks to our hosts, the Board of Water and Light Commissioners, and Station WJIM of Lansing. Our special thanks to Mr. Harold Gross, manager of Sta-

tion WJIM, and to Mr. Otto Eckert, chairman of our Host Committee, who were invaluable helping us to present this broadcast.

Don't forget that next week your Town Meeting will come you from Marion, Ohio. We have invited four experts on foreign affairs to explore the subject: "Our Present Foreign Policy Leading to Peace or War?" Our speakers: James B. Reston, diplomatic correspondent on the *New York Times*; Rear Admiral Ellis M. Zacharias, United States Navy, Retired, and author of the recent best seller, *Secret Missions*; Bartley Crum, publisher of the *New York Star*, and former member of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine; and Thomas I. Emerson, professor of law at Yale University, and candidate for Governor of Connecticut on the Progressive Party Ticket. Your guest moderator will be Dr. Houston Peterson, professor of philosophy at Rutgers University.

So plan to be with us next Tuesday and every Tuesday at the sound of the Crier's Bell. (*Applause.*)

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